

Maj. Gen. Thackston served as AG from 1994 to 1998

On page 2: Teens enjoy Wilderness Camp

South Boston readiness center dedicated to former AG

The Virginia Guard dedicated the South Boston readiness center to the memory of the late Maj. Gen. Carroll Thackston, former Adjutant General of Virginia, during a ceremony held July 13, 2013. Thackston, the Adjutant General of Virginia from July 1994 to September 1998, passed away Feb. 17, 2013, at the age of 79. He served as the mayor of South Boston from 2004 until his passing. Former Governor George Allen, Secretary of Public Safety Marla Graff Decker, Virginia Senator Frank Ruff, former delegate and retired judge Frank Slatyon and Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Long, Jr., the Adjutant General of Virginia, joined the Thackston family, Soldiers and Airmen and members of the South Boston community in remembering Thackston's dedicated service.

"It is a pleasure to be here to honor General Thackston," Allen said. "He is the embodiment of the Citizen Soldier in so many ways. He was a great patriot, great American, great Virginian, and to me, a true friend. In this readiness center, his spirit lives on."

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/07/17/4184/>



Members of Maj. Gen. Carroll Thackston's family unveil the plaque dedicating the South Boston readiness center in his name during a ceremony held July 13, 2013.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Va. Guard engineers complete Fort Pickett repairs worth nearly \$2 million

Engineers from the Petersburg-based 276th Engineer Battalion, 91st Troop Command completed extensive road and culvert repairs along Fort Pickett's roadways during their annual training June 15-29, 2013.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/07/16/4144/>

116th BSTB holds 3rd annual Warrior Stakes competition

Soldiers from the Fredericksburg-based 116th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team tested their Army Warrior skills in the third annual "Warrior Stakes" competition June 19, 2013, at Fort Pickett.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/07/13/4125/>

TAG Pistol Match invites Soldiers to show off marksmanship skills

Fifty Virginia Guard Soldiers from units across the commonwealth traveled to Fort Pickett June 21-23, 2013, to compete against the best pistol shooters in the state at the Adjutant General's Pistol Match hosted by the Virginia Guard's Marksmanship Training Unit.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/07/07/4120/>

Va. Airmen participate in joint training mission providing free health care

A dentist and a medical services technician from the Virginia Air Guard joined Air National Guard, Army, Navy and Navy Reserve medical professionals providing free health care at the "Hope of Martin" Innovative Readiness Training project July 8-19, 2013 in Martin, Tenn.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/07/18/4188/>

Mark Your Calendars!

July 21: Lane Reversal Exercise

The Virginia State Police, Virginia National Guard and the Virginia Departments of Emergency Management and Transportation will practice closing six traffic control gates and test inter-agency coordination efforts and radio communications.

I-64 East between Exit 205 near Richmond and Exit 231 near Williamsburg will be closed on July 21 from approximately 4:30 a.m. to 7 a.m. while several state agencies test the I-64 Emergency Lane Reversal Plan.

For more information, visit <http://www.vaemergency.gov>.

Teens enjoy outdoors at Wilderness Camp

More than 60 teenagers from around the state gathered June 23-27 for the Virginia National Guard's sixth annual Teen Wilderness Adventure Camp at Wilderness Adventure at Eagle Landing in New Castle, Va.

The Virginia National Guard Youth Program partnered with Operation Military Kids for the camp, which provided children of Virginia National Guard service members four days of outdoor adventures, including mountain biking, kayaking, inner tubes, ropes courses and zip lines.

"This is our sixth year of doing Teen Wilderness Camp at WAEL," said Drew Davis, lead child and youth coordinator with Virginia National Guard Family Programs. "We're grateful that we are able to provide our families with this opportunity because it gave 61 teens a chance to completely 'disconnect' from whatever challenges they may have going on at home as well as any technology, social media, and cell phones."

Because of the remote location of the camp, there is no cell phone coverage. As a result, the teens must really interact and get to know each other, according to Allison Mecadon, youth coordinator with Virginia National Guard Family Programs. While they spend their days hiking, mountain biking, zip lining and kayaking, they often spend the evenings playing charades, card games or some other group activity.

"You don't see kids do that nowadays," Mecadon said.

The camp also helps develop the teens' leadership skills, especially for many of the veteran campers. They not only include newer campers into their groups but they also look out for the younger teens attending the camp.

While the theme of the camp is outdoor adventures, one of the main goals is to introduce campers to other teens who are in the same boat. National Guard teens often grow up in areas without



Campers at the Virginia National Guard Teen Wilderness Adventure Camp prepare to go inner tubing down a river June 24, 2013 at Wilderness Adventure at Eagle Landing in New Castle, Va.

other military families around and the camp offers a chance for them to meet people their age who face the same situations they do.

"I think having other kids they relate to is one reason so many return," Mecadon said.

According to Davis, this year's camp filled up in record time.

"I think what makes this camp so successful is not only the time and effort from our volunteers, but also the lasting relationship with Wilderness at Eagle Landing and the fact the teens know that their backgrounds are all the same," Davis said. "They all support someone in the military within the state of Virginia."

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/07/09/4128/>



Campers at the Virginia National Guard Teen Wilderness Adventure Camp participate in a team-building exercise June 25, 2013.

MORE ON THE WEB

Funeral Honors Team recognized for performing 10,000th funeral

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/07/16/4164/>

Va. Guard Youth Program teams with ODU to assist children

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/07/16/4136/>

229th MP Co. presented marksmanship award, sharpen warrior skills during AT

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/07/17/4178/>

Photos: JFHQ-VA welcomes new commander

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157634625816594/>

Photos: AG, SEL visit 266th MP Co., observe stress fire exercise

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157634691043041/>

Photos: Military voter registration stressed

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157634590758049/>

Virginia National Guard on Twitter

<http://www.twitter.com/VaNationalGuard>

Virginia National Guard on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/VaNationalGuard>